Blast and Ballistic Protection Systems and Method of Making the Same

RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims priority from U.S. Provisional Application Serial. No. 60/407,723 filed on September 3, 2002, entitled "Blast and Ballistic Protection Systems and Method of Making the Same," the entire disclosure of which is hereby incorporated by reference herein.

US GOVERNMENT RIGHTS

This invention was made with United States Government support under Grant No. N0014-01-1-1051, awarded by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency/Office of Naval Research. The United States Government has certain rights in the invention.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to both blast and ballistic protection structures by integrating high strength fibers, cells, foams and composite and pure materials; as well as method of manufacturing the same.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF INVENTION

An embodiment provides a protection structure comprising: open cell core structure; a top face sheet coupled to said core structure; a bottom face sheet coupled to said core structure distal from said top face sheet; a projectile arresting layer coupled to said top face sheet distal from said core structure; and a fragment catching layer couple to said bottom face sheet distal from said core.

An embodiment provides protection structure comprising: open cell core structure; a top face sheet coupled to said core structure; a bottom face sheet coupled to said core structure distal from said top face sheet; a projectile arresting structure

disposed inside said core structure; and a fragment catching layer couple to said bottom face sheet distal from said core.

An embodiment provides protection structure comprising: open cell core structure; a top face sheet coupled to said core structure; a bottom face sheet coupled to said core structure distal from said top face sheet; a projectile arresting layer coupled to said top face sheet distal from said core structure; and a fragment catching structure disposed inside said core.

An embodiment provides a protection structure comprising: open cell core structure; a top face sheet coupled to said core structure; a bottom face sheet coupled to said core structure distal from said top face sheet; a projectile arresting layer coupled to said top face sheet distal from said core structure; and a fragment catching structure disposed inside said core and a fragment catching layer couple to said bottom face sheet distal from said core.

An embodiment provides a protection structure comprising: open cell core structure; a top face sheet coupled to said core structure; a bottom face sheet coupled to said core structure distal from said top face sheet; a projectile arresting structure disposed inside said core structure; and a fragment catching structure disposed inside said core.

An embodiment provides a method of making a protection structure comprising: providing an open cell core structure; coupling a top face sheet to said core structure; coupling a bottom face sheet to said core structure distal from said top face sheet; coupling a projectile arresting layer to said top face sheet distal from said core structure; and coupling a fragment catching layer to said bottom face sheet distal from said core.

An embodiment provides a method of making a protection structure comprising: providing an open cell core structure; coupling a top face sheet to said core structure; coupling a bottom face sheet to said core structure distal from said top face sheet; disposing a projectile arresting structure inside said core structure; and coupling a fragment catching layer to said bottom face sheet distal from said core.

An embodiment provides a method of making a protection structure comprising: providing an open cell core structure; coupling a top face sheet to said core structure; coupling a bottom face sheet to said core structure distal from said top face sheet; coupling a projectile arresting layer to said top face sheet distal from said

core structure; and disposing a fragment catching structure inside said core.

An embodiment provides a method of making a protection structure comprising: providing an open cell core structure; coupling a top face sheet to said core structure; coupling a bottom face sheet to said core structure distal from said top face sheet; coupling a projectile arresting layer to said top face sheet distal from said core structure; and disposing a fragment catching structure inside said core and a fragment catching layer couple to said bottom face sheet distal from said core.

An embodiment provides a The method of making protection structure comprising: providing an open cell core structure; coupling a top face sheet to said core structure; coupling a bottom face sheet to said core structure distal from said top face sheet; disposing a projectile arresting structure inside said core structure; and disposing a fragment catching structure inside said core.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE DRAWINGS

The foregoing and other objects, features and advantages of the present invention, as well as the invention itself, will be more fully understood from the following description of preferred embodiments, when read together with the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIGS. 1-4 provide schematic illustrations of various respective embodiments for providing both blast and ballistic protection. It should be appreciated that the core, arresting layer, catching layer, intermediate components and any related components and aspects thereof have been simplified for the sake of illustration and thus it should be understood that these components can be a variety of forms and exist as a combination or sub-combination as discussed through out this document.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

An embodiment of the present invention provides a periodic, open-cell core structure made from ductile metals or other materials to provide blast (and impact) protection. The embodiment is also effective when used as the cores of sandwich panel structures. An embodiment works by transforming the energy of the blast into plastic deformation of the core/facesheet system.

Referring generally to **FIGS. 1-4**, cores **21** include tetrahedral, pyramidal and Kagomé trusses, bilayer trusses, trilayer trusses, foams(e.g., open or stochastic), various woven or wire rectilinear arrays and honeycomb all bonded by, for example, transient liquid phase bonding, diffusion bonding, welding (including resistance methods) and adhesive bonding. By attaching a hard facesheet **51** (e.g., ceramic) to the exterior of the core **21** and utilizing the interior free volume to position additional ceramic **24** or ballistic fibers (e.g. Kevlar or Spectra fiber) **25** it is possible to erode, fracture, and rotate an incoming projectile. The core **21** (e.g., metal) aids the rotation process and increases the area of the fragment perpendicular to its propagation direction. A Kevlar or other ballistic fiber fabric, composite, or layer **71** then catches the fragment and stops its penetration through the area beyond the structure **1**. Other materials other than Kevlar can be used such as, but not limited thereto, Spectra, S2 glass, and/or Zylon. Additional fragment catching fabrics/composites can be attached to the rearmost face of the core **21** to provide greater protection. Further, it is sometimes desirable to infiltrate laminates of this fabric with a hardening resin.

An embodiment utilizes a metallic cellular metal core **21** with strongly bonded facesheets **21,22** to absorb (by plasticity) the blast energy (one or more face sheets may be omitted or added if desired). Additional facesheets can be applied between layers of the core so as to provide intermediate facesheets (not shown). The face sheets can be mesh, aperture, or perforated as desired. Projectiles are arrested by fracture/erosion during impact with a ceramic material **51** placed on the outer surface (or the interior of the core **21** as shown as reference **24** in **FIGS. 3-4**) or both. The core **21** induces projectile rotation so that a large area is presented for "capture" by a ballistic fabric **71**. This fabric or other suitable structure can be placed in the core **21** (as shown as reference **25** in **FIGS. 2** and **4**) or attached to the back surface of the sandwich panel **23**. The fabric **71** or ceramic **51** can be incorporated in a matrix (e.g. a polymer) to create a composite attached to the faces **21, 22** or impregnated within the core **21** and can be a wide variety of structure types and designs of fragment catching structure **25** or projectile arresting structure 24.

It should be appreciated that the protection structure 1, and any associated face sheets, cores, projectile arresting structures and layers, and projectile catching structure and layer as discussed throughout (as well as any sub-elements thereof) can be planar, substantially planar, and/or curved shape, with various contours as desired.

The core **21** can be any cellular metal, for example. The core may also be core systems for the highest performance applications. Examples are tetrahedral, pyramidal, Kagomé trusses, bilayer, trilayer, honeycomb, metal textiles or cores made from rectilinear arrays of solid or hollow tubes. Lower performance systems could use stochastic metal foams (e.g. Duocell or Cymat foams) or non-metals.

The ceramics could be ultra-hard, high density boron carbide, silicone carbide, or aluminum oxide. Various composites utilizing ceramic, metal, or polymer matrices can also utilized.

The protection system or structure **1** described above can be manufactured by a variety of methods. For example, the ceramic front sheet **51** is attached by metal to ceramic bonding methods. The ceramic can be added to the structure as small tiles with/without overlapping edges to accommodate thermal expansion mismatch. Ceramic or other suitable materials can be used. For instance, other structural forms and other acceptable materials, such as, but not limited thereto, include carbon matrix composites, fiber reinforced, particular reinforced, strips, applied layers, rods, spheres, chemically hardening slurries, cubes or other geometric shapes self contained as discussed in PCT International Application No. PCT/US03/23043, entitled " Method For Manufacture of Cellular Materials and Structures for Blast and Impact Mitigation and Resulting Structure," filed on July 23, 2003. (of which is hereby incorporated by reference herein in its entirety, or otherwise, and chemically hardening slurries. The ceramics can also be attached by many other approaches including adhesive bonding and mechanical attachment (bolts, rivets, etc.), but not limited thereto. Ceramics can be incorporated in the structure **1** or core **21** by slurry and dry powder infiltration methods. Adhesives or brazes can, if desired, be used to bond the ceramic to the metallic structure. All or just a part of the core can be filled with this material. Whereas one cellular metal core system is ideal for retaining ceramic particles and another for blast mitigation, multiple core systems can be used such that one of the aforementioned is stacked upon another. Multiple cores, face sheets, and sub-cores can be stacked upon one another.

Ballistic fabrics can be used for the fragment catching structure **25** and can be inserted into completed periodic, open-cell core **21** (as shown in **FIGS. 2 & 4**). Because of the existence of straight, continuous channels fibers/fiber bows of pieces of woven tape can be inserted. Other structures other than tape can be used such as,

but not limited thereto, ribbons and/or integrally woven layers. When low temperature metal bonding is used to make the core (e.g. resistance welding) the ballistic fabric **25** or suitable structure can be inserted in the core **21** before or as it is constructed.

The fabric or fabric composite backing layer (an exemplary form of reference **71)** can be attached by adhesive or mechanical methods. Numerous mechanical attachment approaches can be envisioned.

With regards to the 1) core, 2) top, bottom, or intermediate face sheets, 3) truss arryays and truss units 4) textile layers, 5) perforated or aperture sheets, 6) open cell foams and stochastic foams, 7) bonding and adhesive techniques, 8) heating, 9) pressing, and 10) stacking of the aforementioned components and related handling, additional support can be referred to in the following applications that are owned by the Applicant and applied herein (and of which are hereby incorporated by reference herein in their entirety):

1. PCT International Application No. PCT/US01/17363, entitled "Multifunctional Periodic Cellular Solids And The Method Of Making Thereof," filed on May 29, 2001, and corresponding US Application No. 10/296,728, filed November 25, 2002 (of which are hereby incorporated by reference herein in their entirety).
2. PCT International Application No. Application No. PCT/US02/17942, entitled "Multifunctional Periodic Cellular Solids and the Method of Making thereof," filed on June 6, 2002 (of which is hereby incorporated by reference herein in its entirety);
3. PCT International Application No. PCT/US01/22266, entitled "Heat Exchange Foam," filed on July 16, 2001, and corresponding US Application No. 10/333,004, filed January 14, 2003 (of which are hereby incorporated by reference herein in their entirety)
4. PCT International Application No. PCT/US01/25158, entitled "Multifunctional Battery and Method of Making the Same," filed on August 10, 2001, and corresponding US Application No. 10/110,368 filed July 22, 2002 (of which are hereby incorporated by reference herein in their entirety)

5. PCT International Application No. PCT/US03/16844, entitled "Method for Manufacture of Periodic Cellular Structure and Resulting Periodic Cellular Structure," filed on May 29, 2003 (of which is hereby incorporated by reference herein in its entirety).
6. PCT International Application No. PCT/US03/23043, entitled " Method For Manufacture of Cellular Materials and Structures for Blast and Impact Mitigation and Resulting Structure," filed on July 23, 2003. (of which is hereby incorporated by reference herein in its entirety).
7. PCT International Application No. PCT/US03//xxxxx, entitled " Method for Manufacture of Truss Core Sandwich Structures and Related Structures thereof," filed on September 3, 2003 [Attorney Docket No. 00819-02]. (of which is hereby incorporated by reference herein in its entirety).

The following publications, patents, patent applications are hereby incorporated by reference herein in their entirety:

1. U.S. Patent No. 4,404,889 to Miguel
2. U.S. Patent No. 4,979,425 to Sprague
3. U.S. Patent No. 5,022,307 to Gibbons, Jr. et al.
4. U.S. Patent No. 5,471,905 to Martin
5. U.S. Patent No. 5,533,781 to Williams
6. U.S. Patent No. 5,654,518 to Dobbs
7. U.S. Patent No. 5,663,520 to Ladika et al.
8. U.S. Patent No. 6,073,884 to Lavergne
9. U.S. Patent No. 6,216,579 to Boos et al.
10. U.S. Patent No. 6,253,655 to Lyons et al.
11. U.S. Patent No. 6,286,785 to Kitchen
12. U.S. Patent No. 6,526,862 to Lyons

Of course it should be understood that a wide range of changes and modifications could be made to the preferred and alternate embodiments described above. It is therefore intended that the foregoing detailed description be understood that it is the following claims, including all equivalents, which are intended to define the scope of this invention.